

# The Laurens Advertiser.

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## TEN MEN KILLED IN GAS EXPLOSION

**Terrific Explosion on Memphis Outskirts**

**PROPERTY DAMAGE  
OVER \$200,000**

**Block of Frame Dwellings Levelled to the Ground and Inmates Caught Beneath Falling Timbers. Theory on Spontaneous Combustion Is Advanced.**

Memphis, Tenn., Jan. 24.—Ten negroes dead, approximately a score injured, some probably fatally, and property damage estimated at \$200,000, made up the known toll tonight of an explosion of "casing head" gasoline awaiting unloading from a tank car to the plant of the Colyar Reese Company in North Memphis, which let go this morning with a blast that wrecked a part of the oil plant, leveled a block of frame dwellings and shook the entire north end of the city.

Of the injured, two are white persons: L. C. Scott, superintendent of the Reese plant, and L. C. Wilder, truck superintendent. Both were badly burned but physicians stated tonight they will recover.

Colyar Reese, president of the oil company, attributed the explosion to spontaneous combustion, due to the contact of vapor escaping from the tank car when the metallic cap was removed preparatory to unloading the car, came in contact with the atmosphere. The tank car, which contained 8,000 gallons of casing head gasoline produced by the absorption process, was shipped here from Kelleyville, Oklahoma, Mr. Reese stated, and was loaded in a low temperature. When the cap was removed, according to his theory, the vapor came in contact with much higher atmospheric conditions here and the explosion followed.

It was stated that representatives of the United States bureau of explosives and experts from the refinery from which the car was shipped will arrive tomorrow to definitely determine the cause of the blast.

When the explosion let go a row of tenement houses along an entire block were splintered and the occupants thrown to the street or caught under the falling timbers. Most of those killed outright were badly mangled while several of the injured were so badly burned they died soon after reaching a hospital. When police and firemen reached the scene the streets and alleys in the vicinity were littered with splintered timbers and torn and twisted household goods, with the dead and injured caught in the tangled mass of wreckage.

Andrew McKinley, the negro who was removing the dome from the tank car when the explosion occurred, was hurled several hundred feet through the air. He was badly burned and died tonight. McKinley was quoted as saying that when he removed the cap, gas rose to a height of twenty feet and formed a pall of black smoke which ignited and exploded.

Almost simultaneously pools of oil on the ground caught fire and a second explosion occurred. One report was that McKinley used a chisel in attempts to remove the cap from the car. This, however, has not been verified. Mr. Reese stated that his investigation disproved any theory other than that the explosion was caused by spontaneous combustion.

Besides the damage in the immediate vicinity, window glasses within a radius of several blocks were shattered by the concussion which was felt a distance of half a mile from the scene. Two sheds at the plant of the Colyar Reese plant were lifted bodily from their foundations.

Fire which followed in the wake of the explosion, completed the work of destruction. The flames were checked, however, before they spread beyond the splintered wreckage.

Mr. and Mrs. Ed. Hicks left last week for West Point, Miss., where they will join their parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Hicks, to make their home there. They were joined the latter part of the week by Mr. John Sumner who has been associated in business with them for several years. The many friends of all of these regret to see them leave Laurens.

## NARROW ESCAPE FOR ELECTRIC LINEMAN

**Ernest Tollison Severely Shocked While Working on Electric Line Pole.**

Ernest Tollison, 18 years of age, lineman in the employ of the Reedy River Power Company, received a severe electrical shock Monday afternoon while working on a pole on Caroline street at the end of J. C. Shell & Company's store and for awhile spectators who were attracted to the scene thought that he would be electrocuted. After he was taken down from the pole, however, and given medical attention it was found that he had not been seriously burned or otherwise permanently affected. The wire with which he had come in contact was of 220 voltage, strong enough to give a severe shock but not necessarily fatal.

Young Tollison was helping run a wire from this post to the building formerly occupied by L. B. Blackwell as a printing shop. He was safely strapped to the cross arms of the pole and had a firm foot-hold with his cleats when he accidentally touched the high voltage wire. The force of the charge knocked his hand loose and his body backwards, so that he was only held by the pole-straps in a limp and almost unconscious condition. He was able to make enough sound, however, for Mr. J. C. Shell who happened to come out of the rear end of his store, to hear him. Mr. Shell rushed for his telephone and had the current turned off the wire. Some one else called for the fire wagon, and with the use of ladders and rope the young man was brought safely to the ground. He was carried to the store-room of the Harney Electric Company and given medical treatment. He soon revived and was able to walk home. Yesterday it was reported, he was feeling the worse for his experience and remained at home. It was found that the bottom of his feet had been considerably burned where they came in contact with a ground wire.

## RURAL SCHOOLS URGED TO TRY FOR PRIZES

**Rural School Improvement Associations Should Send in Reports to Qualify for Prizes.**

Miss Minnie Wallace, who has recently taken charge of the Rural School Improvement Association work of the county, is attempting to interest the schools of the county in the statewide contest now being carried on in the interest of rural school improvement. There are several prizes offered for which the associations of the county may qualify, says Miss Wallace, and she has urged all the schools of the county to enter. Under the contest rules every improvement association is required to send regularly the report of the monthly meeting so that it may be forwarded to the state organizer for credit in the contest. Besides the larger prizes, the contest provides for a \$5.00 prize for every school which sends in a monthly report for the time between March 1, 1920 and March 1, 1921. Back reports, states Miss Wallace, may be sent in now and receive full credit.

Green Pond, Shiloh, Lanford, Waterloo and Barksdale-Nannie are the only schools which have sent reports, according to the records in Miss Wallace's office. Other schools wishing to try for the prizes are asked by her to send in their reports at once or write her for information.

## Fisheries Declares Dividend

On account of the large amount of stock held in this county, principally by farmers, in the Fisheries Products Company, of Wilmington, N. C., much interest was attached to the meeting of the directors held in Wilmington on January 18th. According to the Wilmington Dispatch, dividends of 10 and 8 per cent were declared on the common and preferred stock respectively, to be paid either in cash or fertilizers. The statement for a year less than a year's business, showed net profits of \$663,246.75.

## Barksdale-Hammond

Miss Elizabeth Barksdale, the attractive daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Barksdale, and Mr. Arthur Hammond, of Spartanburg, were happily married Sunday afternoon at 2:30 o'clock at the home of the bride's parents between Gray Court and Barksdale Station. Only a few intimate friends and relatives were present. The ceremony was performed by Rev. Graves L. Knight, D. D.

## DISCREPANCY IN RETURNS OF AUTOS

**2012 Registered for License Tags in Laurens, but Only 1926 Returned for Taxation.**

A discrepancy of 31,241 automobiles and trucks is noted in comparing the total number of licenses issued by the state highway commission during 1920, and the total number of motor vehicles returned for taxation by the people of the state as shown in the annual report of Comptroller General Sutherland, says the Columbia State. Laurens county had 2912 automobiles and motorcycles registered for licenses during 1920, but only 1,926 returned for taxation, a discrepancy of 986.

The comparison of these figures shows that licenses issued for automobiles, trucks and motorcycle totaled 94,751, and the number of automobiles, trucks, motorcycles and bicycles returned for taxation in the entire state was 63,510 leaving 31,241 unaccounted for.

All counties in the state are short a number of automobiles and trucks, according to the figures with the exception of Marion county, which returned 142 more than was licensed, indicating that some of the automobile owners may have forgotten to secure licenses.

In the total number of motor vehicles registered by the highway commission for the year, Greenville county leads with 6,860, and Richland county is second with 6,123, while Anderson runs a third. In the difference between the number licensed and the number returned for taxation Greenville also leads with 3,004 according to the figures from the highway commission and the comptroller general.

Another interesting fact brought to light is that Allendale, Bamberg, Beaufort, Hampton, Jasper and Saluda have no motorcycles, according to the license figures.

The state highway commission does not license bicycles, but they are required to be returned for taxation, and taking this in consideration, the discrepancy is still larger. There are 908 motorcycles registered.

## \$1,416,375,000 THE FIRE LOSS IN UNITED STATES

New York, Jan. 23.—Property worth \$1,416,375,000, the equivalent of 283,275 new houses at \$5,000 each or more than enough to shelter the total population of a state as large as Connecticut was destroyed by fire in the United States in the period from 1915 to 1919, as shown by the quinquennial analysis of 3,500,000 adjustments made public by the national board of fire underwriters here tonight.

Electricity, the chief cause of fire loss, led with a total of \$84,086,471 for the five years. Matches and smoking stood second with \$73,474,248, and defective chimneys came next with \$56,650,915. Other causes in their order, were: Stoves, furnaces, boilers, and their pipes, \$55,133,181; spontaneous combustion, \$49,792,886; lightning, \$39,828,489; sparks on roofs, \$29,271,585; and petroleum and its products \$25,910,434. Incendiarism contributed \$21,596,965 to the damage, and miscellaneous unknown causes completed the total.

## "RIP VAN WINKLE" IN SUMTER JAIL

**Prisoner Sleeps Two Days and Nights and is Refreshed by Nap.**

Sumter, Jan. 22.—George Wells, a negro of this city, has established a record for sound sleeping even for that race of good sleepers. The place was the city guard house which is evidently comfortable and convenient for a rest cure. Wells was employed as deliveryman for Edd's Department store until he was accused of taking shoes and hiding them behind the store. He was then lodged in the guard house, where he went to sleep Monday afternoon about 6 o'clock. Tuesday morning, not having stirred, the officers tried to wake him but to no avail. Two physicians were summoned and they too failed to arouse him. He was shaken, tickled and put through many tests, but George slept on. One of his friends came forward, stood his bond, had him removed to his home on Railroad avenue. Wednesday afternoon "Rip Van Winkle" awoke and shook himself and appeared none the worse for the long slumber.

## SECOND TERM OF GOVERNOR COOPER

**Associate Justice R. C. Watts Administers Oath of Office to Gov. Robert A. Cooper.**

Columbia, Jan. 19.—The utmost simplicity marked the inauguration yesterday of Robert A. Cooper of Laurens as governor of the state of South Carolina. The fact that he had been unopposed in the race for the office, combined with the fact that he was entering on his second term tended to lessen to a certain extent the display which is sometimes shown on such occasions.

Ostentation was strictly taboo, all the ceremonies incident to the occasion being performed with a befitting dignity and reserve, all of which tended to make the inauguration impressive. The ceremonies were held in the hall of the house of representatives in the presence of the members of the house of representatives and of the senate. The balcony was filled with visitors, the number of women attending being especially noticeable.

Promptly at 12:30 o'clock P. S. Wilson, Sergeant-at-Arms, announced the arrival of the senate. After the members had reached the chairs reserved for them, the sergeant-at-arms announced the arrival of the governor-elect and their escorts.

Prayer was offered by the chaplain of the house, the Rev. R. L. Keaton. J. T. Liles, retiring lieutenant governor, who presided over the exercises, announced that R. A. Cooper was present and was ready to take the oath of office. The oath was administered by Justice R. C. Watts of Laurens.

Immediately after taking the oath of office Governor Cooper delivered his inaugural address, being given the closest attention by the audience. At its conclusion, the audience broke into hearty applause. His entire message was devoted to a discussion of education.

Wilson G. Harvey was then sworn in as lieutenant governor after which he took charge of the exercises and dissolved the general assembly. The senate at once retired to its hall, where the new lieutenant governor delivered his address.

The exercises occupied just 30 minutes, the town clock striking one as Mr. Liles turned over to Mr. Harvey the gavel.

Other state officers assuming their duties yesterday were S. T. Carter, treasurer; W. W. Moore, adjutant and inspector general; Sam M. Wolfe, attorney general; W. Branks Dove, secretary of state; Walter E. Duncan, comptroller general; B. Harris, commissioner of agriculture; J. E. Swearingen, state superintendent of education; Frank W. Shealy, railroad commissioner.

Of the various officers, only Walter E. Duncan, comptroller general, and Wilson G. Harvey, lieutenant governor, are serving for the first time.

## MORE FOR EASTERN SUFFERERS

**Another Remittance Forwarded to Columbia For Near East Relief.**

The advertiser made another remittance of \$27.50 last week to E. O. Black, Columbia, chairman for this state of the Near East Relief Fund. The contributors were two sons of Mr. and Mrs. Benchoff, Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Terry and Mrs. J. A. P. Moore, as follows:

Wm. Henry Benchoff	.. . . \$10.00
Robert F. Benchoff	.. . . 10.00
Mrs. J. A. P. Moore	.. . . 2.50
R. B. Terry	.. . . 2.50
Mrs. R. B. Terry	.. . . 2.50
Total	.. . . \$27.50

## WOMAN OF SUMTER DIES FROM BURNS

**Newspaper Catches Fire From Fireplace and Sets Clothing on Fire.**

Sumter, Jan. 22.—Miss Sue Brown died at the Tuomey hospital Friday night from the effects of burns last Sunday afternoon, when the paper she was reading caught on fire from an open fireplace and her dress caught from that. The flames were put out by members of the family and she was rushed to the hospital from the home of her sister, Mrs. Terry, in Oswego. The funeral services will be held at Bethel church, Oswego, Sunday morning at 11 o'clock.

## TWO CITY EMPLOYEES REPLACED BY OTHERS

**Street Superintendent and Night Policeman Replaced without a Hearing or Notice of Discharge.**

Two more ex-soldiers were thrown out of employment Monday night by City Council when Carlisle Bolt, street overseer, and J. C. Senn, extra policeman put on for night work, were displaced without a hearing or charges being preferred against them, and S. R. Dorroh and ex-Chief of Police Ed Blakely elected to their places. Mayor Pro-Tem Albert Dial presided at the meeting and others present were Aldermen Bishop, Moore, Smith and Irvin. Alderman Moore, it is reliably reported, refused to vote on the question of displacing the old men and the mayor pro-tem was without voice in the matter.

Mr. Bolt, who was placed in charge of street work when Capt. Richey went into office, said yesterday that he was taken entirely by surprise by the announcement that he had been removed and was ignorant of any charges against him or any criticism of his work other than may be ordinarily expected.

Policeman Senn, stated Chief J. T. Crews yesterday, was placed on the force as an extra man just before Christmas on account of the numerous reports of burglaries in surrounding towns. The new man bore a good record for service, but on account of economy Chief Crews had stated that it might be advisable to take him off and reduce the force, he having been added only as a temporary man.

Sentiment was crystallizing yesterday in certain quarters to have the action of council rescinded when the new mayor goes into office.

## LADIES REST ROOM VISITED BY MANY

**Nearly Every State East of the Mississippi Represented on Registry Book.**

Nearly every state in the Union east of the Mississippi besides three states west of the Mississippi were represented among the guests who registered in the Ladies Rest Room, according to the report just issued by the Business Women's Club, which sponsors the Rest Room. The only two states east of the Mississippi not represented on the register were Vermont and New Hampshire, while the three states from the West who had visitors were Texas, California and Washington. The visitors from California were traveling by automobile and while having their car repaired visited the Rest Room and were delighted with its appointments. They said that it compared favorably with similar rest rooms in other cities of the United States.

Twenty-seven hundred visitors registered at the Rest Room during 1920, continues the report, and no doubt many more took advantage of the conveniences there afforded but did not place their names upon the register.

"It has been our aim to serve the public at large" says the report, "making our town and county more attractive to visitors and any strangers who might pass this way."

"We extend to the business men of the city our sincere thanks for their support during the past year, also for their generous contributions just received for this, the first quarter of 1921."

"It has just occurred to us that there might be others aside from those already contributing who would be glad to help carry on this good work and any contribution can be sent to our treasurer or matron at any time."

## Bishop Kilgo Better.

The news from the bedside of Bishop John C. Kilgo, who underwent an operation at a Charlotte hospital about a week ago is encouraging, said Rev. P. F. Kilgo, his brother, when he was asked about the condition of the bishop. Bishop Kilgo was born in Laurens and he has a great many friends here who are strongly attached to him and hope that he will recover his health again.

## Small Vote Cast

A very small vote was cast in the general election for mayor yesterday, Mr. Jno. A. Franks, of course, receiving all the votes. Mr. Franks will very probably be inducted into office the latter part of this week or the first of next week.

## U. S. LEADING IN SHIP BUILDING

**Launchings in 1920 2,275,000 Tons**

**GREAT BRITAIN  
CAME SECOND**

**United States Lead the World in 1920 in Gross Tonnage of Merchantmen Built, According to Figures Just Out. Great Britain Ranked Second.**

New York, Jan. 24.—The United States led the world on the total gross tons of merchant vessels launched in 1920 according to figures made public today by Lloyd's register of shipping.

The total launchings in ship yards of the world amounted to 5,861,000 gross tons, a decrease of almost 1,300,000 from the 1919 figure, but an increase of more than 400,000 over 1918. The total for the United States was 2,276,000 tons, while Great Britain was second with 2,055,000 tons. Japan, launched 456,000 tons last year, a decrease from 611,000 tons in 1919.

Lloyd's points out that at the beginning of 1920 the United States and Great Britain had on hand practically the same amount of construction to be completed and credits among yards with greater speed than those in Great Britain in that this country exceeded England's total by 20 per cent.

The decline in the total world tonnage launched was attributed to the decline in the American ship building program, America's launching being 1,600,000 tons less than in the previous year. British production showed a gain of more than 400,000 tons. Other countries launched a total of about 1,330,000 tons during 1920, or about 20,000 tons less than in 1919.

In comparison with pre-war figures, the launchings in the United States were nine times as great as in 1913 and throughout the world there was a gain of about 75 per cent.

For the first time since the beginning of the war Great Britain last year exceeded its 1913 figures, the gain being about 7 per cent.

Considerable gains over 1919 were shown by France, which increased the total of its launchings from 32,000 tons to 93,000 tons last year, Holland from 137,000 to 183,000 tons, and Italy from 82,000 to 133,000 tons.

Figures for Germany were not available and were not included in the total.

Lloyd's figures show that the United States far outstripped the rest of the world in construction of tanker tonnage. This country launched 167,000 gross tons of this class of vessels, Great Britain 65,400 tons, and other countries 8,000 tons.

Motor ship construction was declared to be on the increase with a total of 190,000 gross tons of vessels fitted with internal combustion engines in 1920. The total of vessels fitted with turbines which were launched during the year was 1,825,000 tons, or nearly a third of the aggregate total.

Of all the vessels launched last year thirty-two were of 10,000 gross tons or more.

Comparative figures were compiled by the registry showing the yearly outputs of Great Britain and America since 1913. Until 1918 Great Britain was in the lead in ship construction, when the United States jumped ahead with 3,033,000 gross tons against 1,348,000 for Great Britain. In 1919 the United States produced 1,075,000 gross tons against 1,620,000 for England.

## Victory Medals for Ex-Sailors.

The Commandant of the Sixth Naval District has authorized J. E. Bolt to distribute victory medals to all men from Laurens county who served in the Naval Reserve Force during the war. All reservists are requested to hand him their name so that medals may be delivered them at an early date. In case of men discharged from the Reserve Force the discharge papers must be presented.

## Mock Wedding

A mock wedding will be given at Friendship school house by Y. W. A. girls, Friday night, January 28th, beginning at seven o'clock. Admission will be 15 cents.